



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Summary

Main Features

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This publication provides an overview of the South Australian economy. The overview will be updated on a quarterly basis (in September, December, March and June) and in the intervening months the publication will include feature articles that provide a South Australian focus on economic, social and environmental issues.

Explanatory Notes are not included in SA Stats in the form found in other ABS publications. Readers are directed to the Explanatory Notes contained in related ABS publications referenced in the feature article.

This month's article is the first of a series presenting results from the National Health Survey conducted in 2004-05.

If you have any comments about this product please contact Lina Hughes on ph: (08) 8237 7383 or alternatively e-mail lina.hughes@abs.gov.au.

HEALTH OF SOUTH AUSTRALIANS - HEALTH STATUS

This article presents some of the data from the latest National Health Survey (NHS), which was conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) throughout Australia from August 2004 to June 2005. Previous Australia-wide health surveys were conducted by the ABS in 1977-78, 1983, 1989-90, 1995 and 2001.

The focus of this article is the health status of people living in South Australia (SA) in 2004-05. Future articles will present information on their health-related lifestyle behaviours, their health-related actions and their body mass. In these articles, South Australian estimates are compared with estimates for Australia, the other states of Australia and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Separate estimates for the Northern Territory are not available but the data are included in estimates for Australia.

In the 2004-05 NHS, data were collected from people living in private dwellings in urban and rural areas of Australia; excluded were people in hospitals, nursing homes and other non-private dwellings. Of all the states and territories, SA had the oldest population in scope of the survey with just over 14% of the population aged 65 years and over, followed by Tasmania at just under 14%. By comparison, 12% of Australia's population in scope of the survey was aged 65 years and over. The older age structures in SA and Tasmania may impact on the health estimates of their populations.

Results published from the 2001 NHS comparing the states and the ACT were age standardised, that is, the estimates were adjusted to account for differences in age structures of populations. Results published from the 2004-05 NHS comparing the states and the ACT were not age standardised.

In this article the estimates from both the 2001 and 2004-05 surveys have not been age standardised; therefore, for 2001, differences may occur between the non-standardised data in this article with standardised data previously published. Use of non-standardised data enables analysis of real population parameters and provides information relating, for example, to the actual observed prevalence of particular conditions.

Further information on the latest NHS can be obtained from the publication 'National Health Survey, Summary of Results, Australia, 2004-05' (cat. no.4364.0) and the Microsoft Excel tables in 'National Health Survey, Summary of Results: State Tables, 2004-05' (cat. no. 4362.0).

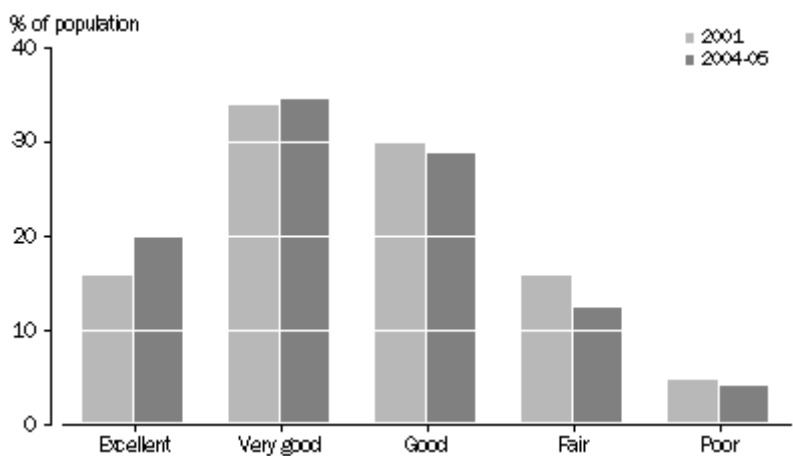
HEALTH STATUS INDICATORS

SELF-REPORTED HEALTH STATUS

In 2004-05, 55% of South Australians aged 15 years and over considered themselves to be in very good or excellent health and 29% considered themselves to be in good health. The remaining 17% of the South Australian population aged 15 years and over reported fair or poor health. These percentages were similar to those at the national level. The reporting of fair or poor health amongst the other states and the ACT ranged from 13% in the ACT to 19% in Tasmania.

The following graph compares the health status of South Australians in 2001 and 2004-05. It shows that a higher proportion of South Australians considered themselves to be in excellent health in 2004-05 than in 2001 and a lower proportion considered themselves to be in fair health.

SELF-REPORTED HEALTH STATUS, SA, 2001 and 2004-05



Source: National Health Survey: Summary of Results, 2001 (cat. no. 4364.0) and National Health Survey, Summary of Results: State Tables, 2004-05 (cat. no. 4362.0)

In 2004-05, the reporting of fair or poor health increased with age with persons aged 15-24

years reporting the lowest percentage of fair or poor health at 7% and persons aged 65 years and over reporting the highest at 32%.

LONG TERM MEDICAL CONDITIONS

In 2004-05, 79% of South Australians had a long term medical condition (which had lasted or was expected to last for six months or more) compared with 81% in 2001. In the other states and the ACT, prevalence of long term medical conditions ranged from 75% for New South Wales (NSW) to 79% for the ACT in 2004-05. Nationally the prevalence of long term medical conditions was 77%.

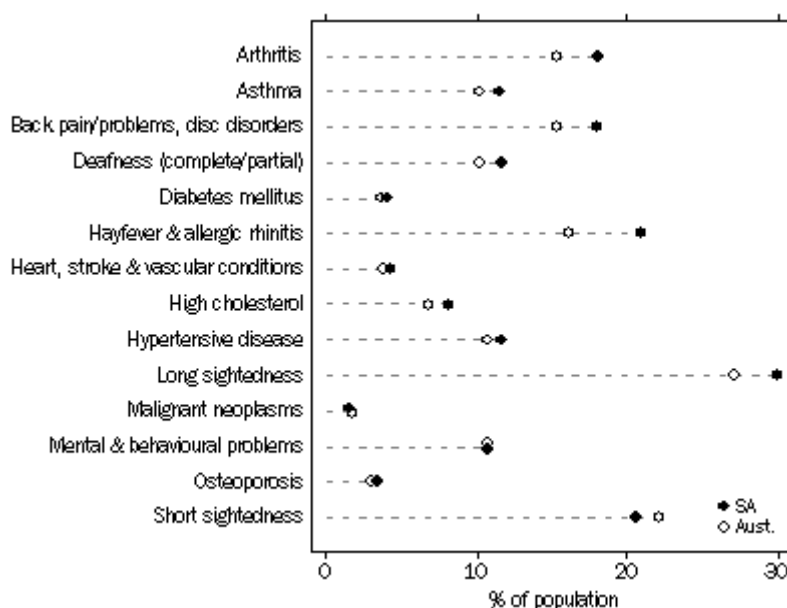
Problems with eyesight were the most common conditions across all the states and the ACT in 2004-05. SA's prevalence was 53% of the population and the other states and the ACT ranged from 51% in NSW to 55% in the ACT. Long sightedness was more common than short sightedness in SA (30% and 21% of the population respectively) and at the national level (27% and 22% respectively). In the other states and the ACT, prevalence of long sightedness ranged from 24% in Victoria to 29% in NSW and Tasmania, and the prevalence of short sightedness ranged from 19% for Tasmania to 27% for the ACT.

Just over one-fifth (21%) of SA's population suffered from hayfever and allergic rhinitis, statistically significantly above the national prevalence of 16%. Prevalence in the other states and the ACT ranged from 14% in NSW and Queensland to 22% in the ACT.

SA's prevalence of back pain, back problems and disc disorders was also above the national prevalence (18% and 15% respectively).

The following graph compares the prevalence of these and other long term conditions in SA with Australia.

SELECTED LONG TERM MEDICAL CONDITIONS, SA AND AUSTRALIA, 2004-05



Source: National Health Survey, Summary of Results, Australia, 2004-05 (cat. no.4364.0)

The most common long term medical conditions in South Australian children aged 0-14 years were asthma (14%) and hayfever and allergic rhinitis (11%), both above the national figures of 12% and 8% respectively.

Common long term medical conditions in South Australians aged 65 years and over were:

- long sightedness (65% compared with the national figure of 62%)
- arthritis (53% compared with the national figure of 49%)
- hypertensive disease (40% compared with the national figure of 39%)
- complete or partial deafness (35% compared with the national figure of 34%).

MENTAL WELLBEING

Mental and behavioural problems, which have lasted or are expected to last for 6 months or more, were reported by 11% of South Australians and 11% of Australians in 2004-05. Respondents of the NHS were not asked specifically whether diagnosis was by a health professional so these problems may be self-diagnosed. In SA and Australia, the most common problems were anxiety related problems and mood (affective) problems, both categories being reported by 4% of males and 6% of females.

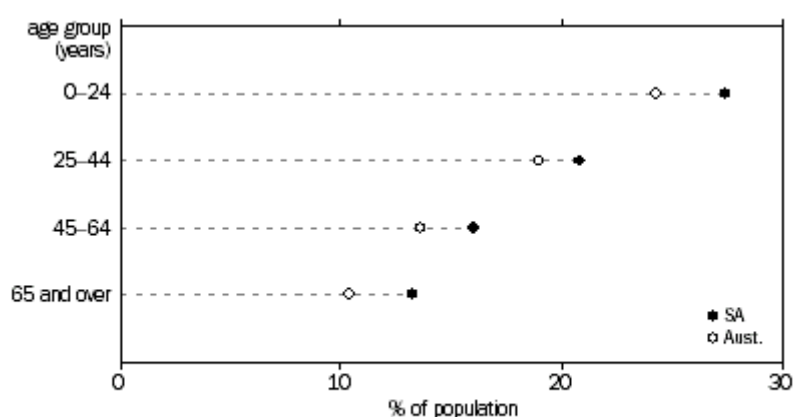
Another measure of mental wellbeing in the NHS was the Kessler 10 Scale (K10), which is based on 10 questions about negative emotional states in the four weeks prior to interview. The K10 scale indicates respondents' current psychological distress. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of persons aged 18 years and over in SA had low levels of current psychological distress, 24% had moderate levels, 9% had high levels and 3% had very high levels. These percentages were similar to those recorded at the national level in 2004-05 and for SA and nationally in 2001. In SA in 2004-05, proportionally fewer adult males than females (10% and 15% respectively) were highly or very highly distressed.

INJURIES

South Australians who sustained an injury requiring medical treatment or some other action in the four weeks prior to interview represented 21% of the population. This was higher than the national injury rate of 18%. Injury rates in the other states and the ACT ranged from 17% in NSW and Tasmania to 19% in Victoria, Qld, and WA.

The following graph shows that for each of the four age groups, SA had higher injury rates than those recorded nationally.

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF PEOPLE WHO HAD INJURIES (a), SA AND AUSTRALIA, 2004-05



(a) Injuries which occurred in the four weeks prior to interview and required medical treatment

Source: National Health Survey, Summary of Results: State Tables, 2004-05 (cat. no.

In SA, similar proportions of male and females had injuries (21% and 20% respectively). The most common injuries were cuts (7% of population) and falls (5% of population).

References:

Source: National Health Survey: Summary of Results, 2004-05 (cat. no. 4364.0)

National Health Survey, Summary of Results: State Tables, 2004-05 (cat. no. 4362.0)

The companion data to National Health Survey: Summary of Results, 2001 (cat. no. 4364.0)

About this Release

An economic summary for South Australia is provided each quarter in the form of graphs and explanatory text. In the second and third months of each quarter one or more articles examine an area of specific interest to South Australia.

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